

# SUNDAY Territorian

April 22, 2018

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## BABY BORN IN CAR

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Vanessa Gilchrist and partner Brett Smith with baby Cruise, who was born in the back of a LandCruiser  
Picture: KATRINA BRIDGEFORD

### Chief to head his razor gang

TERRITORY Chief Minister Michael Gunner, Treasurer Nicole Manison and Education Minister Eva Lawler hold the fate of the NT's public servants in their hands as the team that make up a new budget review committee.

In the 2017-18 budget, up to 100 government jobs will be axed as part of voluntary redundancy packages, with a further 50 to go in 2019.

The job cuts will see a reduction in only 0.5 per cent of the public service workforce.

A spokeswoman for the Treasurer said the review was all about finding inefficiencies in the public sector.

**» STORY P3**

### Fracking gets a green pass

FEARS around fracking in the Territory have been eased by the Queensland Government, which has revealed the industry has not caused any significant damage to groundwater in the six years of major commercial development of the coal seam gas industry.

The practice has caused outrage among some landowners and environmentalists because of fears it will destroy the aquifers farmers rely on.

The Northern Territory Government this week removed a ban on fracking, which will allow for further development of the shale gas industry.

**» STORY P7 + EXCLUSIVE GUNNER COLUMN ON FRACKING P12**

**EXCLUSIVE**

**The Gunner Government has officially ditched its unpopular plan for Myilly Point >> P11**



**PHILLIPPA BUTT**  
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# Blue-collar drug support

**EXCLUSIVE**  
**MANDY SQUIRES**

## Union sends members to Thai rehabilitation clinic

ONE of the nation's biggest unions, which has thousands of Territory members, is bankrolling the treatment of drug-addicted members at luxury overseas rehab centres.

The Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU), is offering its special cut-price deals at one of Thailand's most exclusive clinics, The Dawn in Chiang Mai, to kick their habits.

On its website, which sports the CFMEU logo among oth-

ers, The Dawn describes itself as "Asia's leading, luxury rehab facility", with treatments costing thousands of dollars a month.

The cut-price deals are available to the union's national membership base of 150,000 workers and their families, with some members also able to receive financial support to help cover the remaining cost of their treatment.

CFMEU spokesman Shaun

Reardon said members were helped financially on a case-by-case basis, with money coming from discretionary union funds or raised as needed. There was no set amount allocated.

"We do whatever it takes," he said. "If there is a family that needs help they come to us and then we look at each individual case but the long and the short of it is we don't leave people high and dry."

Chief executive of The Dawn, Ohm Poolsawaddi, said there were currently two family members of a CFMEU member at the rehab centre on the special union rate.

He was now in talks with Incolink, the CFMEU's redundancy fund, about the role it may play in supporting members to go to The Dawn in future.

"We've been in touch with them, and it's still in progress,

but they are happy to support their union members financially for them to be able to afford treatment because in Australia, my understanding is, there is a huge need for rehab," Mr Poolsawaddi said.

Mr Reardon said there was a sharp focus on drug use by tradies and a push to help workers who requested it, and also a dire lack of drug detox beds in Australia, with long waiting lists for rehab services,

he said. Other Australian unions contacted by the *Sunday Territorian* this week said they supported members battling drug and alcohol addictions through free counselling, education and support services.

Some said they also put members in touch with rehab services and centres.

It is understood at least one other building industry union has tapped into discretionary funds in the past to help members pay for residential drug or alcohol rehabilitation, but at Australian rather than overseas clinics.

## Tradies warned to cover up

**LAUREN ROBERTS**

TERRITORY tradies are being urged to wear long sleeves, despite the heat, in a bid to cool soaring skin cancer rates.

Cancer Council skin cancer prevention manager Liz King said two in three people who grow up in Australia would get skin cancer in their lifetime.

"It is inevitable that many tradies have to work in the sun, but setting up a routine that protects your skin from harmful UV rays is easy with the right gear and the right attitude."

Figures from ServiceSeeking found 51 per cent of tradies wore shorts and T-shirts to work to stay cool.

Scott Services Electrical Contracting director Ben Scott said he makes sure employees take protective equipment seriously.

Top End electrician Phil Chan worked in NSW and said Darwin's climate made wearing shorts and a T-shirt tempting. "During the winter months in Sydney, you're wearing a hoodie and long pants," he said. "Here it can be a bit more of a challenge — you don't want to cover up."



Scott Services electrician Phil Chan isn't surprised to hear tradies are at a higher risk of skin cancer in Darwin

Picture: KERI MEGELUS

## Culture at heart of education

**ISABELLA HOOD**

A NEW learning program highlighting the wisdom and traditions of Arnhem Land elders is being rolled out by the NT Government to inspire teenagers' re-engagement with education.

The Dhupuma Foundation Learning Program has launched the first in a series of education programs in north eastern Arnhem Land for Aboriginal people aged 14-17 who have become disconnected from traditional school settings.

Education Minister Eva Lawler said the program will deliver a unique curriculum for Yolngu students that combines cultural traditions with mainstream learning including literacy and numeracy.

"This program promotes the development of strong young people, through the delivery of targeted training and learning programs based on community and cultural connections," she said.

At the weekend, the first group of young people participated in the inaugural culture camp run by elders, a flexible learning approach Ms Lawler said offered greater opportunities for every child to re-engage with learning.

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